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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 006467

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/20/2016

TAGS: PREL PGOV TU EU CY

SUBJECT: TURKEY/EU/CYPRUS: TURKS HEADED TO HELSINKI; "NO"

TO VAROSHA BUT STILL WORKING ON PACKAGE

REF: A. ANKARA 6391

¶B. SECSTATE 189542

Classified By: Ambassador Ross Wilson, reasons 1.4 (b), (d).

¶1. (C) Turkish MFA A/US Ertugrul Apakan travels to Helsinki today, accompanied by Cyprus Deputy Director General Levent Bilman, for a day of technical talks November 22 on the Finnish Turkey/EU/Cyprus proposal. The talks will also serve as preparation for meetings FM Gul will have with the Finnish FM and EU Enlargement Commissioner Rehn on the margins of the EuroMed conference November 27.

¶2. (C) Apakan phoned Ambassador late November 21 and relayed that Turkey does not want Varosha in the package, period. Apakan and others have come increasingly close to drawing a red line at inclusion of Varosha; they have finally done so and carry that message to Helsinki. On all other issues, there is flexibility, Apakan stated, and Turkey is trying to see what it can do. Turkey hopes there can be enough work done that the Finnish proposals can be put on paper. Turkey appreciates US support with the EU and hopes it can continue, especially with the EU's East European and other new members.

¶3. (C) In a separate conversation, the Finnish Ambassador in Ankara confirmed the Helsinki meetings will take place. She said Apakan had been insistent that this remain close hold. Her discussions have mirrored ours -- no on Varosha, yes on opening Ercan airport to direct flights from Europe. She remains less than sanguine about Turkish flexibility. She was coy on what talks -- if any -- may be taking place in parallel or separately with the Greek and/or Turkish Cypriots, but it sounded as if no specific talks were planned. "The subject now is Turkey," she said.

¶4. (C) The next big play will be an EC meeting planned for December 6, its last ahead of the GAERC on December 11-12 and the European Council meeting on December 14-15. The Finns, goal is to present a clear and final picture on ports/airports by the 6th and for the EC then ideally to agree on appropriate recommendations. The Finn said that the Europeans, goal is not to have the Council meeting be dominated by Turkey issues and that the GAERC should handle this.

¶5. (C) According to the Finnish Ambassador, the current plan B, which the Finns don't much like, is a freezing of some chunks of the negotiations -- presumably a to-be-determined number of Acquis chapters -- for a couple of years; sufficient time to get through the respective election cycles in Turkey, Greece and the ROC. The language concerning this would affirmatively call for a review at the end of that time.

¶6. (C) Comment: The Turks are headed to Helsinki, prepared to discuss non-Varosha options; it is a red line for the Turkish military. They may be receptive to a minimal package

that, per ref B, includes temporary opening of one or more ports in exchange for at least partial lifting of Turkish Cypriot isolation. Otherwise, they seem to be preparing for some form of suspended animation. End comment.

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WILSON